

Message Text

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0624
INFO AMCONSUL LENINGRAD
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 MOSCOW 08098

USDOC FOR BEWT

E.O.11652:GDS
TAGS:ECON, ENRG, EAGR, EIND, ELTN, UR
SUBJECT: BREZHNEV'S TRIP INDICATES HIGHER PRIORITY FOR
SIBERIA

REF: (A) MOSCOW 7752, (B) MOSCOW 7424 AND PREVIOUS

SUMMARY. IF THERE WAS DISAGREEMENT ABOUT ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT POLICY TOWARD SIBERIA EARLIER -- AND BREZHNEV
HAS SAID THAT THE DECEMBER PLENUM TOOK UP QUESTIONS
RELATING TO IT -- THEN IT APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN RESOLVED IN
FAVOR OF INCREASED EMPHASIS ON DEVELOPING THE NATURAL
RESOURCES AND POTENTIAL PRODUCTIVE POWER OF SIBERIA AND THE
FAR EAST. NEWS COVERAGE OF THE BREZHNEV TRIP AND THE
FORMAL LEADERSHIP APPROVAL OF IT GIVE NO CLEAR INDICATION,
HOWEVER, ABOUT DECISIONS ON THE ALL-IMPORTANT QUESTION OF
INCREASED INVESTMENTS IN THE AREA. THERE ARE HINTS THAT
HOUSING AND LIVING CONDITIONS MAY GET SOME MORE MONEY, AND
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THE RAILWAYS CLEARLY WILL. END SUMMARY.

1. ACCORDING TO THE APRIL 15 CENTRAL PRESS, THE
POLITBURO, PRESIDUM OF THE SUPREME SOVIET AND THE COUNCIL
OF MINISTERS LISTENED TO INFORMATION ABOUT BREZHNEV'S TRIP
TO SIBERIA AND THE FAR EAST AND FULLY APPROVED HIS WORK
THERE. THE TRIP WAS DESCRIBED AS HAVING "IMPORTANT

SIGNIFICANCE" FOR FULFILLING THE DECISIONS OF THE 25TH PARTY CONGRESS ON THE COMPLEX OPENING UP OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND DEVELOPMENT OF PRODUCTIVE POWER IN SIBERIA AND THE FAR EAST, "WHICH ARE PLAYING A GROWING ROLE IN THE ECONOMY OF THE COUNTRY."

2. PARTY ORGANIZATIONS AT ALL LEVELS WERE TOLD TO "DRAW PRACTICAL CONCLUSIONS" FROM THE INSTRUCTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS VOICED BY BREZHNEV DURING THE TRIP. SPECIFIC TASKS MENTIONED WERE: (1) FURTHER TO BUILD UP IN THE EAST THE SUPPLY OF COAL, OIL AND GAS, FIRST OF ALL, OF TYUMEN, AND (2) MORE FULLY TO UTILIZE THE GIGANTIC HYDRO-ELECTRIC RESOURCES OF THESE REGIONS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE ALUMINUM, CELLULOSE, PETROCHEMICAL AND OTHER BRANCHES OF INDUSTRY.

3. THEN FOLLOWED THE USUAL INJUNCTIONS ABOUT THE NECESSITY TO FULFILL THE PLAN AND THE (ADDITIONAL) "SOCIALIST OBLIGATIONS" UNDERTAKEN FOR 1978, TO DEVOTE SPECIAL ATTENTION TO INCREASING PRODUCTION BY BETTER UTILIZATION OF INTERNAL RESERVES, FASTER CREATION OF CAPACITY TO OVERCOME BOTTLENECKS, AND INCREASING ORGANIZATION, ORDER AND DISCIPLINE AT WORK. LOCAL PARTY AND GOVERNMENT ORGANS, MINISTRIES AND DEPARTMENTS WERE DIRECTED TO TAKE MEASURES TO SPEED UP THE CONSTRUCTION OF IMPORTANT ENTERPRISES ALREADY UNDERWAY, IMPROVE MATERIAL-TECHNICAL SUPPLY TO CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS, ELIMINATE SHORTCOMINGS IN

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TRANSPORTATION, IMPROVE THE PLANNING OF TRANSPORT, AND BRING ORDER INTO THE USE OF MOBILE PERSONNEL (PODVIZHNOGO SOSTAVA).

4. AGRICULTURE WAS TOLD TO CONCENTRATE ON CARRYING OUT SPRING SOWING IN A SHORT TIME AT A HIGHER AGROTECHNICAL LEVEL, MAKING BETTER USE OF THE FLEET OF MACHINES AND TRACTORS. THE GOAL IS TO SATISFY THE POPULATION'S REQUIREMENTS FOR MEAT, GRAIN AND VEGETABLES BY PRODUCING THEM LOCALLY ON THE BASIS OF DEEPENING INTER-OBLAST SPECIALIZATION AND COOPERATION. IT CALLED FOR BETTER STORAGE AND PROCESSING FACILITIES FOR GRAIN, VEGETABLES AND FRUIT.

5. A REVIEW OF THE NEWS COVERAGE OF THE WHOLE TRIP INDICATES THAT:

-- TYUMEN IS TO INCREASE ITS OUTPUT OF GAS AND OIL BUT TO DO IT AT LEAST PARTLY ON THE BASIS OF BETTER USE OF EXISTING RESOURCES;

-- DEVELOPMENT OF WESTERN SIBERIA IS "ONE OF THE MAJOR

TASKS" OF THE FIVE YEAR PLAN;

-- BREZHNEV PUT FORWARD CONCRETE INSTRUCTIONS ABOUT IT,
WHICH INCLUDED GREATER ATTENTION TO CAPITAL CONSTRUCTION,
PUTTING NEW CAPACITY INTO OPERATION AND SOLVING A NUMBER OF
TECHNICAL AND TRANSPORTATION PROBLEMS;

-- BREZHNEV UNDERLINED MACHINE-BUILDING, PETROLEUM
PROCESSING AND PETROCHEMICALS IN OMSK;

-- HE ALSO FOCUSED ON HOUSING, LIVING CONDITIONS AND THE
SUPPLY OF FOOD AND CONSUMER GOODS;

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 03 MOSCOW 08098

-- IN NOVOSIBIRSK HE TOLD THE SIBERIAN DEPARTMENT OF THE
ACADEMY OF SCIENCES TO COME UP WITH MORE PRACTICAL MEASURES
FOR THE APPLICATION OF SCIENCE TO PROBLEMS IN THE FIELDS
OF ENERGY, GEOLOGICAL EXPLORATION, PETROCHEMICALS, MACHINE
BUILDING AND OTHERS;

-- IN KRASNOYARSK BREZHNEV UNDERLINED THE IMPORTANCE OF
THE SOVIET FAR EAST TO THE COUNTRY'S ECONOMY, WITH EMPHASIS
ON THE SAYANSK TERRITORIAL-PRODUCTION COMPLEX WITH ITS
GREAT HYDRO-ELECTRIC RESOURCES AND ITS ALUMINUM FACILITY;

-- IN THIS CONNECTION HE PRAISED LENINGRAD FOR THE HIGH
QUALITY OF ITS WORK IN PROVIDING EQUIPMENT FOR SAYANO-
SHUSHENSK (IMPLICITY SUGGESTING THAT OTHER FIRMS SHOULD
ALSO PAY ATTENTION TO HELPING SIBERIAN DEVELOPMENT);

-- BREZHNEV SPOKE OF IRKUTSK AS HAVING UNIQUE HYDRO-ELECTRIC RESOURCES (WHICH PRODUCE 5 PERCENT OF THE COUNTRY'S ELECTRICITY);

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-- ALTHOUGH HE PRAISED THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE BRATSK AND UST-ILIMSK INDUSTRIAL COMPLEXES AND THEIR PULP AND PAPER AND ALUMINUM OUTPUT, HE CALLED FOR GREATER PRODUCTION THROUGH BETTER UTILIZATION OF THEIR EXISTING CAPACITIES (WITH NO HINT OF INCREASED INVESTMENTS);

-- HE EMPHASIZED THE TREMENDOUS IMPORTANCE OF B.A.M. AND THE PLANTS TO BE BUILT ALONG IT -- SUGGESTING THAT THERE WILL BE SUBSTANTIAL INVESTMENTS HERE IN THE FUTURE;
-- HE DID, MOREOVER, SPEAK OF THE NEED FOR MORE HOUSING AND BETTER LIVING CONDITIONS ALONG THE B.A.M. -- WHICH CARRIED AT LEAST THE HINT OF MORE ATTENTION AND INVESTMENT FOR THESE ITEMS;

-- IN VLADIVOSTOK, AFTER HEARING A NUMBER OF PARTY FIRST SECRETARIES DESCRIBE THEIR PROBLEMS, BREZHNEV REAFFIRMED THAT (AS BAYBAKOV HAD SAID OF THE 1978 ECONOMIC PLAN) THERE WOULD BE INCREASED INVESTMENTS MADE ON RECONSTRUCTING AND BUILDING NEW RAIL LINES;
-- HE TOLD THE PARTY FIRST SECRETARIES TO LOOK TO BETTER MANAGEMENT AND ORGANIZATION OF EXISTING, INTERNAL RESOURCES TO ACHIEVE THEIR TARGETS;

XAA AND, IN SOME OF THE STRONGEST PHRASINGNMHAT HE USED DURING THE WHOLE TRIP, HE REMINDED ALL CONCERNED THAT LEADERS SHOULD STOP TRYING TO SHIFT BLAME TO OTHERS AND GET ON WITH MAKING DECISIONS AND GETTING THE JOB DONE.

6. ON APRIL 18 THE PRAVDA EDITORIAL ON "MORE RAPID DEVELOPMENT OF THE EASTERN REGIONS" REVIEWED THE TRIP ALONG THE LINES OF THE LEADERSHIP ASSESSMENT, GIVING PARTICULAR EMPHASIS TO:
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-- THE ESTABLISHMENT OF LARGE TERRITORIAL-INDUSTRIAL COMPLEXES (FOR A SIBERIAN-SOVIET COMMENT ON THE DIFFICULTIES OF THESE, SEEMOSCOW A-56, PAGE 2-3);

-- SHORTCOMINGS IN THE USE OF EXISTING RESOURCES, FOR
EXAMPLE, AT UST-ILIMSK WHERE PARTS OF THE COMPLEX ARE
DEVELOPING IN AN UNBALANCED WAY;

-- THE NECESSITY FOR MORE RAPID PUTTING INTO OPERATION OF
"INTERNAL RESERVES," FOR BETTER USE OF EXISTING CAPACITY,
AND FOR ECONOMIZING ON ALL INPUTS;

-- CRITICISM OF LEADERS FOR TRYING TO "SHIFT BLAME"
RATHER THAN SOLVE PROBLEMS;

-- THE PROBLEM OF RETAINING CADRE IN THE EASTERN REGIONS,
AND

-- THE CONCOMITANT NEED TO IMPROVE LIVING CONDITIONS THERE.

7. COMMENT: IT APPEARS THAT THERE WILL BE EVEN GREATER
EMPHASIS ON DEVELOPING SIBERIA BECAUSE OF INCREASING NEED
FOR ITS NATURAL RESOURCES AND INDUSTRIAL CAPACITY.
HOWEVER, LITTLE NEW LIGHT WAS SHED ON INVESTMENT POLICY.
SHORT OF CHANGES IN THE SYSTEM - WHICH NO ONE EXPECTS -
ONLY ADDITIONAL RESOURCES ARE LIKELY TO ALLEVIATE MANY OF
THE CHRONIC PROBLEMS WHICH HE "DISCOVERED." BREZHNEV
GENERALLY EMPHASIZED THE NECESSITY TO MAKE BETTER USE OF
EXISTING RESOURCES WITHIN THE ORGANIZATIONS CONCERNED, BUT
HE OFFERED LITTLE HINT AS TO HOW THIS SHOULD COME ABOUT.
HE DID SAY THAT THE RAILROADS WOULD GET MORE INVESTMENT
THAN ORIGINALLY PLANNED. WHILE HIS EXPRESSED CONCERN ABOUT
HOUSING AND LIVING CONDITIONS DOES SUGGEST THAT PERHAPS MORE
INVESTMENT MAY BE FORTHCOMING IN THOSE FIELDS, AND PERHAPS

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PARTICULARLY ALONG THE B.A.M. (AGANBEGYAN'S REMARKS
(REF A) LEND SOME SUPPORT TO THIS VIEW), THE USSR'S MEANS
FOR BOLSTERING SIBERIAN DEVELOPMENT DO NOT APPEAR TO BE
ALL THAT PLENTIFUL. TOON

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